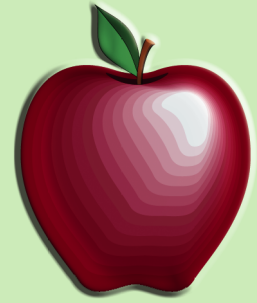


Health Care

...Pathways to Change



TOPIC: Survey results

BACKGROUND

In July 2002, as part of the "Health Care: Pathways to Change" initiative, more than 12,000 Los Alamos National Laboratory employees and retirees received a survey seeking their health care preferences and priorities. The survey results have been incorporated into the process of making changes to the laboratory's health care program to meet the challenge of rising costs. Other factors in the process include budgetary constraints, characteristics unique to New Mexico and the Los Alamos area, and the national trend toward higher health care costs.

HIGHLIGHTS OF RESULTS

- In all, 4,702 employees and retirees responded to the survey, a response rate of about 40 percent.
- Forty-eight percent of respondents said they lived in Los Alamos, 14 percent in Santa Fe, 9 percent in Espanola, 6 percent in Albuquerque and 23 percent elsewhere. (The latter figure was driven by the relatively high participation of retirees who live outside the region.)
- In choosing a health plan, respondents ranked "services that I need are covered," "lower monthly contribution" and "my doctors are part of the network" as their most important factors in making decisions. Respondents listed "quality of care," "part of plan network" and "experience" as key factors in selecting providers, with "quality of care" by far the most important factor.
- Seventy-one percent of respondents preferred making some plan design changes to maintaining the current plan design and doubling plan member contributions. Seventy-six percent of employees and 61 percent of retirees were in favor of making plan design changes.
- Overall, 81 percent of respondents indicated a willingness to enroll in a health plan other than one administered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Mexico. Employees were more favorable to this than retirees by a margin of 89 percent to 70 percent.
- Respondents were equally divided over a plan alternative that would exclude Los Alamos providers compared to one that would charge higher copayments for care from Los Alamos providers. (Health care costs in Los Alamos County are 17 percent higher than the national average.)
- The so-called "consumer model" - an emerging health plan alternative that would give recipients more personal responsibility and participation in purchasing health care - generated the highest or second-highest level of interest among 35 percent of survey respondents. Of the total, 39 percent of employees and 28 percent of retirees expressed interest in participating in the consumer model.

Visit the "Pathways to Change" web site

<http://www.lanl.gov/health>